

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 13438 120633Z

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SP-02 /027 W

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R 120523Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6191

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

DIA WASHDC

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: NEW FORCE PARTY

SUMMARY. ENTIRE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF NEW FORCE PARTY  
RESIGNS AS CONSEQUENCE OF PARTY'S POOR PERFORMANCE IN  
APRIL ELECTIONS. SECRETARY-GENERAL PRAMOT NAKHONTHAP  
ENTERS MONKHOOD. PARTY CONVENTION TO BE HELD JUNE 16.  
END OF SUMMARY.

1. THE ENTIRE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NEW FORCE PARTY  
(NFP) RESIGNED OVER THE WEEKEND OF MAY 9, THUS PAVING THE  
WAY FOR THE ELECTION OF A NEW PARTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE AT THE NFP CONVENTION ON JUNE 19. IN THE INTERIM  
THE FORMER PARTY LEADERS, EXCEPT SECRETARY-GENERAL PRAMOT  
NAKHONTHAP,  
WILL CONTINUE IN AN ACTING CAPACITY. DR. WIRAT  
KAMUTMAT IS THE ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL IN PLACE OF PRAMOT,  
WHO WILL ENTER THE BUDDHIST MONKHOOD.

2. PRAMOT, ONE OF THE MORE DOCTRINAIRE LEFTISTS IN THE  
MFP, IS LARGELY BLAMED IN THE PARTY FOR THE SEVERE SET-  
BACK SUFFERED BY THE NFP IN THE APRIL 4 ELECTIONS, IN  
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 13438 120633Z

WHICH IT WON ONLY THREE SEATS INSTEAD OF THE 25-30 IT

EXPECTED TO PICK UP. IT HELD 12 SEATS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED IN 1975. PRAMOT WAS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PARTY POLICY OF NOT TAKING THE OFFENSIVE IN ATTACKING THE COMMUNIST REGIMES OF VIETNAM, LAOS, CAMBODIA OR COMMUNISM IN GENERAL. THIS FORCED THE PARTY TO SPEND MUCH OF ITS TIME DEFENDING ITSELF AGAINST RIGHT WING CHARGES THAT IT WAS A SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST PARTY. THE FAILURE TO FACE UP TO THE COMMUNIST ISSUE WAS PROBABLY ONE OF THE MAJOR REASONS THE NFP, A MODERATE LEFT OF CENTER PARTY, WAS OVERWHELMED IN THE ELECTORATE'S MOVE AWAY FROM THE LEFT AND TO THE CENTER.

3. THE MAY 12 BANGKOK POST REPORTS THAT THREE PROMINENT THAIS ARE LEADING CONTENDERS FOR THE POST OF SECRETARY-GENERAL. THESE ARE PRASIT NARONGDET, PRESENTLY NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY GOVERNOR, FORMER DEPUTY PARTY LEADER OF THE NFP AND ONE OF THE PARTY'S MOST IMPORTANT FINANCIAL BACKERS; SOMSAK CHUTO, RECTOR OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (NIDA); AND KRAMON THONGTHAMMACHAT, DEAN OF CHULALONGKON UNIVERSITY'S POLITICAL SCIENCE FACULTY. SOMSAK AND KRAMON HAVE BOTH BEEN IDENTIFIED WITH THE NFP SINCE ITS INCEPTION. ALL HOLD MORE MODERATE AND LESS DOCTRINAIRE VIEWS ON POLITICS AND SOCIETY THAN PRAMOT.

WHITEHOUSE

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